

MEDIA HISTORY | JOUR 413

Reynolds School of Journalism, University of Nevada, Reno
Spring 2020 | TTh 1:30-2:45 | RSJ 212

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INSTRUCTOR:

Dr. Patrick File

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RSJ 208

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Office Hours: Tue. 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. or by appointment

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will help students place today's media landscape in its historical context. Media professionals and engaged citizens must understand the dynamic relationships between media institutions and political, cultural, socioeconomic, and technological change. We will critically examine the role of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religion, and social class in the history of journalism and strategic communication, and consider how one's worldview is influenced by media. We will examine these relationships from the advent of print media to the digital revolution. In our reading, critical responses, and production of a multimedia historical project, we will consider mass media products (texts, images, audio and video recordings) as both historical artifacts and influencers of our collective memory.

SILVER CORE CURRICULUM

This course satisfies Silver Core Objective 13: "Students will be able to integrate and synthesize core knowledge, enabling them to analyze open-ended problems or complex issues." It also develops CO1 (effective composition & communication) and CO3 (critical analysis & use of information), and integrates prior knowledge from CO9 (Science & Technology).

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Integrate and synthesize core knowledge to analyze the complex ways media shape—and are shaped by—our understanding of history [[CO13](#)]
- Demonstrate a knowledge of scientific and technological advancements in media and mass communication and their impact on historical and modern societies [[CO9](#)]
- Synthesize knowledge about the contemporary media landscape, including an explanation of relevant legal and ethical theories and principles, within a broader historical context. [[RSJ Core](#)]
- Differentiate among and integrate information from primary and secondary sources in order to evaluate them as sources of evidence for media history [[CO3](#)]
- Demonstrate the ability to effectively design and produce professional level multimedia communication dealing with an original research question related to the history of journalism and/or strategic communication [[CO1](#), [RSJ Core](#)]

PREREQUISITES

Prerequisites for Capstone courses are junior or senior standing and completion of all General Education courses that build Core Objectives 1-3 and satisfy Core Objectives 4-8.

REQUIRED READING

- Kovarik, Bill. *Revolutions in Communication: Media History from Gutenberg to the Digital Age*, 2nd Ed., Bloomsbury, 2015; ISBN: 9781628924787
- Other readings accessible via course WebCampus site

A note on readings and other materials:* Assigned readings and other materials should be studied **in advance of class meetings in which they are scheduled for discussion. Lectures and class discussion will cover topics related to the readings but may not repeat or refer directly to those materials.

COURSE WEBSITE (WEB CAMPUS)

This course will make frequent use of its WebCampus site. Answers to many frequently asked questions can be found there. The syllabus and schedule are posted there, as well as my contact and office hour information. Additional required readings will be posted there, as well as other study aides. You will post written work there (discussion posts, project proposal and draft) and we will use it for quizzes. Grade information will also be available there.

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ASSIGNMENTS AND QUIZZES

Discussion Posts (100 points each; 300 points total)

You will write three discussion posts (approx. 1,000 words each) in which you will critique and analyze an artifact, argument, or media product related to media history. See the assignment instructions for specifics about each post, including a grading rubric. The posts are due on WebCampus by class time **Tuesday, Feb. 25; Tuesday, March 31; and Tuesday, April 28.**

Extra Credit Opportunity: a thoughtful, substantive reply to another student's post can earn 10 points of extra credit, up to a total of 30 points for the semester. Replies must be posted within a week of the original post.

*This assignment serves as an assessment of your abilities in satisfaction of Silver Core Objective 13, Integration and Synthesis. The posts will enable you to analyze open-ended problems or complex issues and explain key theories in the discipline related to the course topic by identifying and summarizing current scholarly conversations (e.g., challenges, opportunities, trends) that exist within the field of media history and related fields. The posts also serve as an opportunity to demonstrate mastery of skills built from Silver Core Objectives 1 and 3: the effective composition of written, oral, and multimedia texts for a variety of scholarly, professional, and creative purposes and the ability to be critical consumers of information, able to engage in systematic research processes, frame questions, read critically, and apply observational and experimental approaches to obtain information.

Media History Project (50 points each for proposal and draft, 300 for final project; 350 points total)

With a partner, you will complete a multimedia project that highlights a person, event, place, or innovation (or some combination of those) significant to media history. The project is aimed at "doing" both media *and* history. It will be an explainer-type media product intended for a wide audience and it will be based on thorough historical research using the resources of the University of Nevada Library and its Special Collections and Archives. See the assignment instructions for specifics about the project, including a grading rubric. We will discuss the project in more detail in weeks 4 and 5. A project proposal will be due **Tue., March 3**; a draft of the project will be due **Tue., April 7**; and the final project will be due **Wed., May 6**. Submissions should be uploaded to WebCampus by class time of the due date.

* This assignment serves as an assessment of your abilities in satisfaction of Silver Core Objective 13, Integration and Synthesis. Your research is a development of new data or information using techniques from different disciplines previously learned in Core Objectives 1-12 and your proposal is a use of that information to design a project, solve a problem, or analyze a complex issue. Your final product will demonstrate the assembly, development, design, formulation, and/or combination of knowledge gained from Core Objectives 1, 3, and 9 to analyze an open-ended question, problem, or complex issue.

Quizzes (50 points each, 150 points total)

There will be four quizzes. The quizzes will be focused on historical basics: important chronology, people, and developments in media history. They will be administered on classroom computers, will be based on reading, lecture, and class discussion material, and will be composed of multiple choice and short answer questions.

Quiz #1: Thu., 2/13

Quiz #2: Thu., 3/26

Quiz#3: Tue., 5/5

Participation Exercises (150 points total)

We will complete a variety of exercises in class to keep lectures active. These exercises will serve as a measure of in-class participation and engagement with the material, and may include short in-class writing assignments and small-group activities. They will usually be unannounced and cannot be made up without a documented excused absence.

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GRADING

| | | |
|--|----------------|------------|
| Participation Exercises | 150 pts | 15% |
| Discussion Posts (3 x 100 pts each) | 300 pts | 30% |
| Project Proposal & Draft (50 pts each) | 100 pts | 10% |
| Final Project | 300 pts | 30% |
| <u>Quizzes (3 x 50 pts each)</u> | <u>150 pts</u> | <u>15%</u> |
| Total | 1,000 pts | 100% |

You can earn up to a combined total of **1,000 points** on all assignments, exercises, and exams in this class (excluding extra credit). The following chart applies to all graded assignments and the final grade. Final grades are not curved, and will only be rounded up from .5 points. (E.g., 865.5 points rounds to 866, or 86.6% not 87%.)

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|
| A | A- | B+ | B | B- | C+ | C | C- | D+ | D | D- | F |
| ≥ 93% | 90% | 87% | 83% | 80% | 77% | 73% | 70% | 67% | 63% | 60% | 59-0% |

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General Expectations and Extra Credit

You are responsible for all information disseminated in class and all course requirements, including deadlines and examinations.

Your written work in this course will be assessed on its demonstration of skills in critical thinking, research, writing, and understanding of professional standards. This includes an ability to independently gather, verify, critically analyze and interpret relevant information; clearly communicate in writing that is free of grammatical errors; and take into account fundamental skills and standards of professional media and mass communication craft, techniques and practices.

Students are not permitted to submit extra work in an attempt to raise their grades unless I have specified that such opportunities will be afforded to all students. **In any case, extra credit is capped at 50 points per student.**

Please note that your work in this class may be shared, anonymously, with future classes for demonstration purposes. If you would like to opt out of this, you can contact me any time for your work to be excluded, with no penalty.

IMPORTANT POLICIES AND RESOURCES

Attendance

You are expected to be present in class. Students who miss class regularly should not expect to do well in this course. If you must arrive late or leave early, please do so in the least disruptive manner possible.

Excused Absences

Nevada System of Higher Education policy: By Title 4 Chapter 20A, Section 3, paragraph 1, there are no official absences from any university class. It is the personal responsibility of the student to consult with the instructor regarding absence from class. In the event that a student misses a class because of an official university function or event or because of serious personal issues, the Office of the Vice President for Student Services may, at its discretion, send an explanation to affected faculty. The instructor shall make the final determination on whether the missed work can be made up.

My policy: Students will not be penalized for absences during the semester due to documented and unavoidable or legitimate circumstances. Such circumstances include severe illness of the student or his or her dependent, participation in intercollegiate athletic events or other University-sponsored activities, with documentation of the student's participation; subpoenas, jury duty, military service, bereavement, and religious observances. **I will request documentation/verification for excused absences.**

Make-up opportunities: Make-up assignments will **only be allowed in the event of a documented excused absence.** When possible, documentation in support of an absence should be presented and discussed **before** the date of the absence. Schedule announcements from coaches, instructors, and other University staff may satisfy the documentation requirement. I will be the final judge as to whether an absence is excused. Note that in-class participation exercises will only be accepted late in the event of a documented excused absence.

In the case of a missed exam or quiz, assume that a make-up opportunity will only be extended in the case of a dire emergency, with documentation/verification as in an excused absence. If a scheduling conflict arises, you are required to inform me as soon as possible **before** the exam date. The final examination date and time is set by the University and is **not negotiable.** Alternative final exam arrangements will only be offered in keeping with University policy, which does not include exceptions for non-emergency travel plans. It is university policy that all classes are required to meet during the final week at the appropriate times and dates indicated in the Final Week Class Schedule. This is in keeping with accreditation requirements for the appropriate number of hours for classes.

Religious holy days: It is the policy of NSHE (Title 4 Chapter 20 A, Section 3, paragraph 2) to be sensitive to the religious obligations of its students. Any student missing classes, quizzes, examinations, or any other class or lab work because of observance of religious holy days should, whenever possible, be given an opportunity during that semester to make up the missed work. It shall be the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor **in advance** in writing, if the student intends to participate in a religious observance affecting class. This policy shall not apply in the event that administering the assignment at an alternate time would impose an undue hardship on the instructor or the institution that could not reasonably have been avoided.

Late Work

Late assignments—i.e., those submitted after a deadline and without an excused absence—can receive **half credit.** Do not expect exceptions to this policy to be made, short of a major emergency. The written work for this course will be submitted online; therefore, absence from class or campus on a due date will not necessarily justify missing a deadline. If a student claims a **technical problem** prevented timely submission of an assignment, the student must provide documentary evidence (an email, a receipt, a note) that he or she consulted with an information technology specialist (on or off campus) in attempting to resolve the problem. University Information Technology specialists can address many computer/Internet problems. Visit <https://oit.unr.edu/>, call (775) 682-5000 or stop by the help desk in the Mathewson-IGT Knowledge Center.

In any case, unless otherwise discussed with me, **late work will not be accepted more than 1 week after its original due date.** Note that participation exercises will only be accepted late in the event of a documented excused absence.

Ensuring Academic Success: Your student fees cover use of the Tutoring Center (784-6801) and University Writing Center (784-6030). I highly recommend that you make use of the excellent resources provided by the **University Writing Center** to improve your writing and get better grades on written work. Your work in this class—indeed in life in general—will often be judged on your ability to communicate well. It is a skill that all college students—especially those in the Reynolds School of Journalism—are expected to master by the time they graduate, and one-on-one consultation is simply the best way to improve.

If English is not your first language and you feel this might be inhibiting your success in the class, please raise the issue with me personally. We may be able to arrange an accommodation.

Accommodating disabilities: Any student with a disability needing academic adjustments or accommodations is requested to speak with the **Disability Resource Center** (Pennington Student Achievement Center, Suite 230; (775) 784-6000; <https://www.unr.edu/drc>) as soon as possible to arrange for appropriate accommodations.

Academic Conduct: All rights and regulations concerning academic honesty and plagiarism, as they appear in the current University catalog, will be upheld in this course. The University Academic Standards Policy defines academic dishonesty, and mandates specific sanctions for violations. See the University Academic Standards policy: UAM 6,502. Please review the policy found at <https://www.unr.edu/administrative-manual/6000-6999-curricula-teaching-research/instruction-research-procedures/6502-academic-standards>. Violations include cheating, improper citation of sources, using another student's work, reusing assignments submitted in another course; it includes inadvertent as well as deliberate misrepresentation of one's own work. **Proven cases of academic misconduct in this course will result in a "0" on the assignment at issue and could result in an F in the course and/or in disciplinary action by the Academic Integrity Board, depending on the circumstances.** University policy requires that any case of academic misconduct be **reported to the university's Office for Student Conduct**.

***Important note:** If you have any questions about whether an action would constitute academic misconduct, it is imperative that you **consult with the me BEFORE taking the action**. You are encouraged to ask questions—doing so is harmless—but ignorance of University policy does not provide an excuse for a violation *after* an assignment has been submitted for grading.

Audio/video recording: Surreptitious or covert video-taping of class or unauthorized audio recording of class is prohibited by law and by Board of Regents policy. This class may be videotaped or audio recorded only with the written permission of the instructor. In order to accommodate students with disabilities, some students may be given permission to record class lectures and discussions. Therefore, students should understand that their comments during class may be recorded.

Discrimination & Sexual Harassment: The University of Nevada, Reno is committed to providing a safe learning and work environment for all. If you believe you have experienced discrimination, sexual harassment, sexual assault, domestic/dating violence, or stalking, whether on or off campus, or need information related to immigration concerns, please contact the University's Equal Opportunity & Title IX office at 775-784-1547. Resources and interim measures are available to assist you. For more information, please visit: <https://www.unr.edu/equal-opportunity-title-ix>. I am committed to fostering a learning environment that is free of discrimination and sexual harassment. Any student who feels subject to discrimination or sexual harassment should feel welcome to discuss their concerns with the me or the University's Equal Opportunity & Title IX office.

Student Mental Health & Stress Management: As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. University of Nevada, Reno services are available to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus at <https://med.unr.edu/shc/services/psychiatry>.

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CLASSROOM COURTESY AND ETIQUETTE:

Respect for a Diversity of Views

Open inquiry, freedom of expression, and respect for difference are fundamental to a comprehensive and dynamic education. I am committed to upholding these ideals by fostering an environment that is conducive to exploring, engaging, and expressing diverse perspectives and respecting diverse identities.

Coming and going

In order to minimize distractions please do not enter and exit the classroom during class time unless it is absolutely necessary for you to do so. Instead, please plan to take care of whatever needs you may have before or after class. If circumstances will require you to be excessively late, to leave and return during class, or to leave early, please notify me before class begins. **It is especially important to respect this guideline when we have visiting speakers.**

Phones, etc.

Cell phones and other small electronic devices must be **silenced (do not disturb or airplane mode) and stowed in a bag—not in a pocket or on a desktop—during class.** If you have an emergency that you think will require your phone to remain on your desk and switched on, please notify me before class.

Regularly paying attention to a phone or other electronic device rather than class activities **may result in a deduction of 10 points from your participation exercise grade per violation of this policy.** I may or may not interrupt class to ask you to put your device away. Consider this fair warning about this policy.

Laptop and Tablet Computers

Most students will find that a laptop or tablet computer will not be necessary in this class, and that a notebook and writing utensil will be sufficient for taking notes. If you bring a computer to class, please use it for class-related purposes only, unless instructed otherwise. This includes chat and messaging apps.

I ask computer users to **sit where their use is less likely to distract others**, this may include the ends of rows or the back row. I reserve the right to change this policy and ban computers if they are having a negative effect on the classroom environment.

Email Protocol

I will contact individual students or the class as a whole using the email addresses listed on the WebCampus site. It is your responsibility to ensure that those messages can reach you, and to check your email regularly for course updates. I encourage you to contact me via email as well with questions, comments, or thoughts. But please keep in mind that email works best for logistics, such as questions with yes/no answers or arranging a meeting. Email does not work well for explanation, as many questions require. Therefore, please plan to speak with me personally with detailed questions. Also, provide context in your email message; remember to include your name and a clear question.

Syllabus Revisions & Updates

This syllabus, the readings, assignments and class schedule may be revised or updated as the progress and needs of the class require. Updates and revisions will be announced by email, posted on the course WebCampus site, and handed out in class, as necessary.

JOUR 413 SPRING 2020 COURSE SCHEDULE

This schedule is tentative and is subject to change. Announcements of revisions will be made in class, via email, and via the course WebCampus site.

| Dates | Topics | Readings, Assignments, Due Dates |
|--|---|---|
| Week 1 T 1/21 Th 1/23 | Course Introduction Introduction to Media History and Collective Memory | - Kovarik, Introduction - Zelizer, <i>Covering the Body</i> , Introduction (WebCampus) |
| Week 2 T 1/28 Th 1/30 | The Printing Revolution: The Divine Art | - Kovarik, Part I intro and Ch. 1 - Franklin, <i>An Apology for Printers</i> (WebCampus) |
| Week 3 T 2/4 Th 2/6 | The Printing Revolution: Commercial and Industrial Media | - Kovarik, Ch. 2 - Washburn, <i>The African American Newspaper</i> , Intro (WebCampus) |
| Week 4 T 2/11 Th 2/13 | The Printing Revolution: Print in the 20 th and 21 st Centuries | - Kovarik, Ch. 3 - Washburn, <i>The African American Newspaper</i> , Ch. 4 (WebCampus) Quiz #1 in class Th, 2/13 |
| Week 5 T 2/18 Th 2/20 | Doing History: Finding sources, telling their stories Guest Speakers, 2/20: Donnelyn Curtis, UNR Special Collections and Alicia Barber, Reno historian and author | - Selections from KUNR's "Time and Place" (WebCampus) - Startt & Sloan, "The Fundamentals of Good History" (WebCampus) - Media History Project Instructions (WebCampus) *Class meets at MIKC, Special Collections on Thursday, 2/20 |
| Week 6 T 2/25 Th 2/27 | The Visual Revolution: Photography | Discussion Post 1 due T 2/25 - Kovarik, Part II intro and Ch. 4 |
| Week 7 T 3/3 Th 3/5 | The Visual Revolution: Cinema | - Kovarik, Ch. 5 Project proposal due T 3/3 |
| Week 8 T 3/10 Th 3/12 | The Visual Revolution: Advertising and Public Relations | - Kovarik, Ch. 6 - Additional material, TBA |

JOUR 413 Sp20 Syllabus

| Spring Break | No Classes | 3/14 – 3/22 | |
|---|---|---|--------------------------------------|
| Week 9 T 3/24 Th 3/26 | Doing History: In conversation with a Media Historian Guest Speaker (via Skype), 3/24: Cynthia Meyers, Author of <i>A Word from Our Sponsor</i> | - Meyers, <i>A Word from Our Sponsor</i> , Intro & Ch. 8 (WebCampus) Quiz #2 in class Th, 3/26 | |
| Week 10 T 3/31 Th 4/2 | The Electronic Revolution: Telegraph and Telephone | - Kovarik, Part III intro and Ch. 7 - Carey, "Technology and Ideology: The Case of the Telegraph" (WebCampus) | Discussion Post 2 due T 3/31 |
| Week 11 T 4/7 Th 4/9 | The Electronic Revolution: Radio | - Kovarik, Ch. 8 - Zimmerman, "What's so Bad about Ken Burns?" (WebCampus) | Project Draft due T 4/7 |
| Week 12 T 4/14 Th 4/16 | The Electronic Revolution: Television | - Kovarik, Ch. 9 - Murrow, "Wires and Lights in a Box" (WebCampus) | |
| Week 13 T 4/21 Th 4/23 | The Electronic Revolution: Television Doing History: Project Workshop | - Zook, <i>Color By Fox</i> , Intro and Ch. 7 (WebCampus) *Class meets at MIKC, Special Collections on Thursday, 4/23 | |
| Week 14 T 4/28 Th 4/30 | The Digital Revolution: Computers | - Kovarik, Part IV intro and Ch. 10 | Discussion Post 3 due T, 4/28 |
| Week 15 T 5/5 | The Digital Revolution: Networks & Global Culture | - Kovarik, Ch. 11 & 12 | Quiz #3 in class T, 5/5 |
| Final Project Screening: | | Final project due (online) Wednesday 5/6, 10:00 a.m. Thursday, 5/7, 12:10 – 2:10 p.m. | |